Colleges and institutions in the country are covered under this supply; and

(d) what other steps are being taken in this regard to help better management of health care?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH):: (a) There is a substantial demand for radiopharmaceuticals, labelled compounds and radioimmunoassay (RIA) kits in our Country for diagnosis of disease conoition, study of organ functions and treatment of different cancers.

(b) the demand for all the radiopharmacuticals except Thallium-201 and (RIA) kits for routine monitoring is being met adequately in the Country. The demand of Labelled compounds for use in the field of bio-medical engineering and other laboratories as a research tool is also being met in the country.

(c) No, Sir. In all, 130 Nuclear Medicine Centres attached to the Medical Colleges, Institutions & Public Hospitals and 490 RIA Centres are currently covered.

(d) Under a Project called "Extention of Nuclear Medicine", started in the 8th Plan, grant-in-aid is provided to Medical Colleges, Institutions & Public Hospitals to set up Nuclear Medicine Centres and RIA Centres. At the and of the 8th Plan period, 12 Nuclear Medicine Centres and 6 RIA Centres have been set up under this project. The project is being continued in the 9th Five Year Plan.

In addition, the Radiation Medicine Centre of the DAF also conducts courses on radiation medicine to cater to the needs of specialists and technologists in the Nuclear Medicine practices.

Use of Irradiation Technology

2728. SHRI V. RAJESHWAR RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the extent of the use of irradiation technology for preservation and hygienisation of perishable foods in our country;

(b) whether this has become popular with the users; and

(c) the steps being taken to promote this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH):: (a) and (b) In August 1994, the Government of India approved the use of irradiation technology in the country for control of sprcuting in onions and potatoes and for hygienization of spices. The demand for use of this technology from farm producers, food industries and spice exporters has grown since then.

(c) A prototype commercial demonstration irradiator for spices is under construction at Navi Mumbai with expected commissioning in late 1997. The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre has designed a "poton" irradiator for treating potatoes and onions and steps are underway for demonstration of a commercial prototype. Simultaneously, consumer awareness and education programmes about the Deposits and limitations of the technology have been planned for facilitating consumer acceptance of food items preserved by this technology.